

# TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES

## MAY 24, 2006

Chair Knox White called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:30 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL** – Roll was called and the following recorded.

Members Present:

John Knox White  
Jeff Knoth  
Michael Krueger  
Eric Schatmeier  
Robert McFarland

Absent:

Pattianne Parker  
Robb Ratto

Staff Present:

Barbara Hawkins, City Engineer  
Barry Bergman, Program Specialist II, Public Works  
Andrew Thomas, Planning Services Manager

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that his question at the last meeting what if the AC Transit advertising bus shelter program maintenance requirements are similar to the requirements of the City's maintenance contract.

*Commissioner Krueger* requested some edits to the minutes from the April meeting:

- The motion regarding the bus shelter guidelines, reaffirming based on the results of the survey.
- In the discussion of the results, he had pointed out that scores for protection from rain and wind are higher for the shelter that have walls than for the canopies.

<p><i>Commissioner Schatmeier</i> made a motion to approve the April meeting minutes with the recommended additions. <i>Commissioner Knoth</i> seconded. Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.</p>
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**3. AGENDA CHANGES**

*Chair Knox White* moved Item 7C to the top of the agenda.

#### **4. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS**

The Multimodal Circulation Plan sub-committee has not met since the last TC meeting and there is nothing to report on. The Pedestrian Plan will be discussed tonight. The Bicycle Plans update has not been started as of this date.

#### **5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

#### **7C. CITY POLICY REGARDING SPACING BETWEEN BUS STOPS**

*Staff Bergman* presented the staff report. He noted that the Transportation Technical Team (TTT) had requested that the Transportation Commission provide more specific policy direction regarding bus stop location and how their benefits should be evaluated against any negative impacts. He distributed the AC Transit bus stop policy.

*Chair Knox White* asked Staff Bergman to identify what the safety concerns were.

*Staff Bergman* said that a representative from the Alameda Police Department would speak on that issue.

*Officer Craig Rodrigue* said that there was a concern from the crossing guard Mr. Garlets on trying to cross the kids with the crosswalk located across Otis Drive which the location of the bus stops would hinder the safety of the children. With the amount of traffic they had to step out a little further past the end of the bus to look for oncoming traffic. There are also cars that creep up and keep going across the crosswalk without stopping. There are concerns of having a bus stop there in front of the school for both the children and the crossing guards.

*Officer Rodrigue* indicated that he had discussed this issue with Michael Margulies of the Public Works Dept. in the past. After the concerns were raised, the bus stop was bagged and removed.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Peter Muzio* stated that it is 900 ft to Grand and a couple of thousand feet to the Willow bus stop. The bus stop is not in the middle of the block. He recommended putting the bus stop by the walkway, about half way between the two existing stops.

*Barbara Nemer* stated that the proposed bus stop location is hazardous. She said that the crosswalks are not observed by drivers and the location is unsafe because of parents dropping off and picking up their children at the school.

*Elmer Garlets*, a crossing guard at Lum School, stated that the proposed bus stop location is hazardous. He said that the bus stops right on top of the crosswalk, which blocks the view of the crossing guards of oncoming traffic and that vehicles cannot stop in time for the crosswalk. He

suggested moving the stop bar approaching the crosswalk to the west side of the Waterview Isle, which would direct drivers to stop further back from the crosswalk. It would also need adequate signage for the vehicles to remain behind the line when the crosswalks are occupied. He also requested that a parking stall on the west side of Sandcreek Way be reserved for the crossing guards at Lum School during school hours.

*Chair Knox White* responded that the TC could not make any decisions on specific parking but that this could be presented to the Transportation Technical Team (TTT).

*Liz Cleves* reiterated what was said at the TTT meeting concerning the bus stop. She suggested locating it at Pond Isle or Glenwood Isle, instead of near Sandcreek, as this would be closer to the mid-point of the existing bus stops. She noted that the crosswalk near the school is very busy with pedestrians crossing and cars going past without stopping for the pedestrians.

## **CLOSED PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Staff Hawkins* asked AC Transit staff to elaborate on their guidelines in placing bus stops.

*Sean Diest Lorgion* from AC Transit said that currently the bus stops are 2900 feet apart. Policy 508 states that mid block stops are rare and considered only when there are no alternatives available and upon approval of the transportation project coordinator along with the municipality. The design guidelines recommend 1000 feet but the policy actually provides for a range of 800-1300 feet. There are also considerations for ADA access and where shelters are placed.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* asked if there are any policies regarding locating bus stops near schools.

*Mr. Diest Lorgion* responded that he was not aware of any such guideline.

*Staff Hawkins* described a situation when the City had requested relocating a bus stop from the intersection of Encinal/Versailles to Encinal/Grove. Since the stop would have been changed from a controlled to an uncontrolled intersection, and the new location was a skewed intersection, AC Transit would have absolved themselves of all liability

*Commissioner Krueger* asked if there are a defined circumstances under which AC Transit would transfer all liability to the City.

*Mr. Diest Lorgion* said that their traffic engineer would have to review the location for safety concerns, and that this is done on a case by case basis.

*Chair Knox White* said that AC Transit's policy seems to address the Commission's concerns.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* stated that all stops should be safe, but potential usage should be a big factor in the stop location.

<p><i>Chair Knox White</i> moved to accept AC Transit board policy considering bus stops. <i>Commissioner Krueger</i> seconded. Motion was approved unanimously, 5-0.</p>
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## **7A. Review of Environmental Review Process**

*Andrew Thomas* of the City's Planning and Building Department described the environmental review process for the Commission.

## **7B. Alameda Landing (Catellus) Mixed Use Development Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR).**

*Staff Thomas* said that this document is a supplemental DEIR. He noted that the proposal is actual an amendment to the Catellus Master Plan. The original DEIR was completed in 2000 and was certified by the City Council as adequate.

Prologis/Catellus has submitted a proposal to revise the approved 1.3 million square feet of office space. The proposal will be going to the Economic Development Commission on June 15<sup>th</sup>, then on June 26<sup>th</sup> back to the Planning Board concerning the project and master plan amendments. This summer all the responses and comments/revisions done to date will then be brought back to the Planning Board for their final consideration. After that it will be forwarded to the City Council for a final decision.

*Chair Knox White* wanted to know the steps that were needed to approve the DEIR mitigations?

*Staff Thomas* said that there are a couple of steps. When they certify the DEIR they also adopt the mitigation-monitoring program. The mitigations would then be put into a chart for approval.

*Dan Marcus* of Catellus stated that the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan would be paid for by charging customers when they buy or rent office space or retail space, and to homebuyers when they buy their homes. He stated that once Alameda Point, which is 700 acres, is developed, significant revenue can be generated for a coordinated west end TDM program.

*Commissioner Krueger* asked if the re-orientation of 5<sup>th</sup> Street to line up with Broadway in Oakland had accounted for a possible transit connection across the estuary.

*Staff Thomas* said they would build a physical crossing or an aerial tram but it would take time and support from the City of Oakland. He stated that there were a lot of issues with Oakland on the bridges/aerial tram, but that a transit crossing would likely be west of Broadway in Oakland.

## **Public Comment**

*Ani Dimusheva* stated that she liked the alignment of 5<sup>th</sup> Street aligning with Broadway in Oakland to connect the cities. She was bothered that 5<sup>th</sup> Street is the only way to get to the recreation area along the water, and suggested extending other streets towards the water. She

asked how people would be able get out of Alameda? The tube is very congested, and the water taxi would only get people to Jack London Square, still a significant distance from the BART station. She also asked why there is no connection from Alameda Landing directly to the Alameda ferry terminal.

*Lucy Gigli* she stated that many of the mitigation measures would make walking and bicycling worse. Adding lanes on a street would make it more difficult to add bike lanes. She asked that the water taxi be used as a mitigation measure, which would be a good way to encourage people to get out of their cars.

*Ricardo Pedevilla* stated that he is a resident and a new member of Bike Alameda. He indicated that he supports improvements that will treat bicycling as a serious mode of transportation. He noted that the Posey tube is a terrible option. He recommended that a water taxi be implemented early on in the project.

### **Public Comment Closed**

*Commissioner Krueger* found some discrepancies between the document on the cities website and the document in the TC packet. The one in the packet has a date of May 11<sup>th</sup>. Concerned the mitigation at 8<sup>th</sup> and Central that one version talks about widening 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

*Staff Thomas* said there was a draft for two potential mitigations to deal with that intersection. The Planning Board and City Council can review the options and decide what they want to do.

*Chair Knox White* asked if the city has adopted thresholds of significance beyond those for the tubes through the Traffic Capacity Management Procedure (TCMP).

*Staff Thomas* said there is not, but that the City tries to maintain consistency from one EIR to the next.

*Chair Knox White* asked if these traffic projections include the Target project and the Clement extension?

*Staff Thomas* responded that Target was included, but the Clement extension was not.

*Chair Knox White* wanted to know how 20% of the retail trips that the site generates would come up Westline and 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

*Staff Thomas* said that he would have to get to him on that.

*Chair Knox White* said that there were discussions that 40% of trips to the main island were coming from the south. On IV.H-2b it shows 18% along I-880. We assume that 22% are using city streets heading south.

*Staff Thomas* said that 18% of the office R&D is heading south on I-880 and 15% on Atlantic, but a percentage of that may continue and go over the Fruitvale Bridge.

*Chair Knox White* said it appears that there was no analysis done on the transit, pedestrian and bikes.

*Staff Thomas* said that there is a need to consolidate the set of concerns that need to be addressed. Need to come up with an approach to mitigate impacts of vehicle traffic on bicycles and for pedestrians.

*Chair Knox White* asked why not specify TDM program before certifying it.

*Dan Marcus* said the preliminary TDM will be required and would be consistent with the current entitlement, but that the final details would be approved at a later date.

*Staff Thomas* said that the water taxi needs certain permits that are outside of the cities control to build a new landing/dock.

*Chair Knox White* asked that on the mitigation budget for this TDM if dropping the speed limit on Atlantic along with some new signs would be a low cost solution.

*Staff Thomas* said that it was not in the environmental document. There is a development agreement and a development disposition agreement that was approved in 2000 along with financial agreements. It needed to be amended and that they were trying to get cost estimates on these mitigations.

*Staff Thomas* summarized the Commission's comments as follows:

1. Trip distribution numbers (east end and Fremont)
2. Transit bike and pedestrian analysis adequately considers the effect of additional congestion on these modes.
3. Would lowering of speed limits be an alternate of equally effective mitigation as sound walls?
4. Would reducing speed limits on Atlantic Avenue an alternate mitigation to signals and signal coordination suggested in the DEIR.

*Staff Thomas* suggested that the Commission to transmit policy questions to Council separately from questions about whether the analysis is sufficient.

*Commissioner Krueger* expressed concern that some of the mitigations for roadway level of service could have negative impacts on the bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes, as well as on noise levels.

*Chair Knox White* offered his comments:

1. The long-range transit plan doesn't appear to have been consulted.
2. Bike plan was accepted but not adopted.
3. He asked if the parking provided through the project is assumed to be free for users.

*Staff Thomas* said yes.

*Chair Knox White* said that in the DEIR on page III-6 talks about reducing the impacts on automobiles in the general plan goal. He suggested that it would be helpful to explain how the project would do that, since free parking would actually encourage automobile use.

*Commissioner Krueger* moved to complete the discussion of the EIR. *Commissioner Knoth* seconded. Motion was approved unanimously, 5-0.

*Staff Thomas* noted that he had a list of the issues raised by the Commission, and that these would be reflected in the meeting minutes and would also be submitted as a letter to be included in the final EIR.

*Chair Knox White* said that a list of policies would be worthwhile for the City Council to look at. Look at its thresholds of significance and perhaps create a threshold of documents. The thresholds of significance could be updated to better evaluate the impacts on transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians. The city should not rush into it but do an analysis on it.

Congestion may be preferable to the impacts of the mitigations

*Staff Thomas* said that they would look very carefully at it. There are no real straightforward clear accepted thresholds or methodologies for looking at any of the things have been raised.

*Staff Hawkins* asked if there are specific locations that he is concerned about.

*Chair Knox White* asked that the analysis be done for the intersections of concern and the major bike routes. For pedestrians, the area of concern is in the area of the mitigations.

*Chair Knox White* moved to the following: 1) To request that the City Council direct the Transportation Commission, working with staff, to create thresholds of significance to better address the impacts on bicycling, walking, and transit; and 2) To recommend that the City Council carefully evaluate mitigations that require additional lanes in terms of their negative impacts, since some level of increased congestion may be preferable to adding lanes on the west end. *Commissioner Schatmeier* seconded. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0..

*Commissioner Schatmeier* motioned to extend the meeting until 11:00 p.m. *Commissioner Knoth* seconded. Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

## **6A. Draft Policies for Pedestrian Plan**

*Chair Knox White* suggested adding policy C-2.4c, that the City should work with public and private schools to identify needs and roles in addressing infrastructure, education and encouragement.

*Commissioner Krueger* mentioned that the last two policies did not make it into the document that was in the packet. Could not find D4.1.C and D4.3A anywhere.

*Commissioner Krueger* said that D4.1C is to establish an annual program to install curb ramps at crosswalks throughout the City to comply with the ADA. D4.3A is to develop guidelines choosing appropriate street trees and avoiding species with aggressive roots that can cause sidewalk damage.

*Commissioner Krueger* motioned to adopt the policies as presented with the three additions noted. *Commissioner Knoth* seconded. Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

## **8. Staff Communications**

*Staff Bergman* mentioned the update on the bus stop inventory. He noted that it's about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way done and should be completed by the next TC meeting. He also noted that AC Transit staff had passed along some information on the bus bunching issue. They had a consultant look at that issue and what they are considering is lengthening the running time along those routes to account for potential bunching which would result an addition to two peak buses being added to the schedule. Would allow for an additional 8 minutes on the longest run. *Staff Bergman* said that if this change is approved it is scheduled to be implemented August 27<sup>th</sup>.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that this also happens during non-peak hours, and questioned if there are other operational issues that need to be addressed. *Commissioner Schatmeier* also noted the problem during off-peak hours.

*Commissioner Krueger* asked if AC Transit staff could make a presentation on this topic.

*Staff Bergman* said he would make the request of AC Transit.

*Staff Hawkins* said that the Economic Development Commission and the Planning Board had a meeting, which they had reviewed the scope of work of a business district Parking Study. Public Works is not leading the study but will be able to provide input regarding things like use of transportation demand management (TDM) measures free up parking spaces. She noted that it has been recommended that the report be brought to the Transportation Commission when it is 30-50% completed, and again later on in the process.

*Staff Bergman* followed up on the discussion at the May meeting by distributing a section of the maintenance contract for AC Transit's bus shelter advertising program.

*Chair Knox White* asked to receive the complete EIR in the future.

*Staff Hawkins* responded that she had requested copies but that Public Works did not receive the document. She indicated that she would ensure that copies are sent out for the Target EIR.

## **8. Adjournment**

Meeting as adjourned at 11:00 p.m.